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DATE

FROM : American Consulate General, Dhahran

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF : Contels 649 and 654

35 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION 7EA-4	DEPT. RMIR-2 IRC-8
	REC'D 5-26	OTHER CIA-12 USIA-10 Jidda-1 Dhahran-1

SUBJECT: The Trip of King Saud from al-Kharj to Dhahran

After one false start (reftels) SAGRER picked the King up at al-Kharj farm for his long rumored visit to the Eastern Province and for a medical check. SAGRER was told that the journey would be "top secret". Two Budd cars left Dammam for Riyadh on May 16, 1958 where two other cars were added to the train. The train waited on the al-Kharj siding for nearly eight hours for the King to board. In the meantime the "secret" was broadcast on the BBC Arabic program early on the morning of May 17.

Mr. James GILDEA, General Manager SAGRER, who accompanied the train said that a "whole army" came to the train with the King. It was an unruly group on the trip. The guards, who had two cars and box lunches, crowded into the King's car and to his table in the dining car. Mr. Gildea tried to clear the royal car but could get no assistance from the Commander of the Royal Guard.

Mr. Gildea, who had not seen the King for two years, first thought he looked quite normal. However, when he sat down to talk with him he found the King looking "tired and somewhat dazed and befuddled".

Jamal Bey HUSAINI told Mr. Gildea that the King planned to remain in the hospital at Dhahran about ten days until his yacht arrived from Italy. Then, accompanied by Jamal Bey and a small party, the King planned to leave for a cruise along the Dalmatian coast for his health.

The King's son, the Amir Muhammad ibn Saud, told Mr. Gildea that his father had been "a good friend of America". He added that if his father were not leading his country that Saudi Arabia would unquestionably go to the Communists.

Important members of the King's entourage were:

H.R.H. Amir Fahd ibn Saud
 H.H. Amir Faisal ibn Turki ibn Abd al-Aziz
 H.H. Amir Muhammad ibn Turki
 H.H. Amir Muhammad al-Kabir (Son of Saud al-Kabir)
 H.E. Shaikh 'Abdallah al Sa'dun, a shaikh of the Kuntafiq
 H.E. Shaikh Abd al-Rahman al-Tubaishi, Minister of State for Financial Affairs
 H.E. Shaikh Abdallah al-Tubaishi, son of above and Royal Chamberlain
 H.E. Shaikh Abdallah al-Linjawi, Director of H.M.'s Privy Purse

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